

Is it more important, I ask my colleagues, to have a debate about deporting DREAMers than it is to protect Americans against terrorist threats? If someone feels it is more important, not only do I feel they are wrong, but I invite them to have that debate. Put that into a separate policy bill and have the courage to put it on the floor of the Senate as a separate policy bill. Do not compromise our national security by trying to shut down Homeland Security.

This is a misguided strategy, and the resulting fallout isn't just to national security. There are FEMA grants to disaster-stricken areas that will be stopped, local fire departments will be hampered, and thousands of essential public servants from Homeland Security to FEMA, to our terrific men and women in the Coast Guard will be forced to work without pay.

Just last week I visited a Coast Guard installation in Newport, OR. It is an installation that has advanced rescue helicopters. They have five helicopters that work in rotation to make sure one is in the Newport area and a second ready to back it up if it has troubles.

This is a port that has so much sea traffic. It is a deepwater port. It has commercial fishing, it has sports fishing, it has tourists who play on the rocks of the beach and get trapped by the tide, and it has recreational swimmers who get swept out by riptides. There is every kind of possible ocean-front disaster one could look for and so that rescue helicopter is very important.

One of the young men I was speaking to is a rescue swimmer, an extraordinary individual who does some of the scariest, most courageous work in the world. These folks are not paid very much. They have bills to meet, similar to all the rest of us. Is this any way to run a country, to say you have to keep

coming to work, but we are not going to send you a paycheck? To say to the thousands and thousands of young Americans who are working for our country in national security, "you are so important that you have to come to work whether or not we pay you," is just wrong—wrong that we should be so disorganized, so partisan as to compromise our national security.

Our folks who work in national security will be asked to continue working. They work in dangerous conditions that many of us could hardly imagine. They make sure our safety is improved. At a minimum, can't we just have a debate on the funding bill without these political games? They do their work and they feel a sense of duty. Let's have a sense of duty in doing our work. Let's put the Homeland Security appropriations bill on this floor and let's do so without partisan political riders. That game does no honor to our Nation nor to this institution. The public's opinion of this Chamber has fallen due to exactly these types of games. So let's end them.

There is bipartisan support for ending these types of political theatrics. One of my colleagues from Arizona said, "To attempt to use a spending bill in order to poke a finger in the President's eye is not a good move in my view."

My colleague from Illinois, who serves across the aisle in this Chamber, said:

The American people are pretty alarmed, as they should be, about security . . . the way to go forward is just fund the DHS. We ought to strip the bill of extraneous issues and make it about homeland security.

That is a sentiment I think virtually every citizen feels at this moment. Let's make it about homeland security. Let's make it about us having the honor to do our duty. Our job on this floor is to consider this appropriations

bill and not to load it down with favorite policy riders and political theatrics.

Every day that goes by puts us closer to this shutdown. There is no logic in careening from crisis to crisis, but some crises come about due to uncontrollable factors. This one is entirely under our control. This one is entirely under the control of the leadership of the House and the leadership of the Senate.

Earlier this evening I was on a phone call with many folks back home who serve in police departments and fire departments, in rural departments, rural emergency departments, and they were relaying the different types of grants they get that are so important to their communities. Some of them are search and rescue, some of them are disaster preparation, some are grants to fund the fire departments, and some for funding personnel. Nobody on the phone could understand why this Chamber is afraid to have a simple budget debate and an appropriations debate, a spending debate. They see no reason to load it down with politics that can be debated in separate policy bills.

So I say to the leadership of this Chamber: Let's get our act together. Put policy into policy bills and let's put the spending bill before this body in a clean fashion and proceed to protect our Nation's security, as we are charged to do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:18 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 24, 2015, at 10 a.m.